



LEON CARES

Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance Program

The Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance Program provides for the efficient, targeted distribution of more than \$8 million in federal funds allocated to Leon County under the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021* (P.L. 116-260). This program provides funding for assistance with rent, rental arrears, utilities, and utility arrears on behalf of eligible households.

Program Overview:

The Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program will provide critical financial support to eligible Leon County households (including households within the City of Tallahassee) that are experiencing financial difficulty due to COVID-19. Eligible households may receive up to 15 months of total assistance for rent and/or utility payments, which may include up to 12 months for past-due payments as well as future payments in 3-month increments to ensure housing stability. Awarded funds will be paid directly to landlords and utility service providers.

***Please note that all awards are subject to funding availability.
Applying for assistance does not guarantee funding.***

Leon County residents can apply for assistance by completing an application through the Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance Program [application portal](#). A call center is also available to assist residents with questions regarding the Leon County ERA Program and how to apply. Citizens may reach the call center at **(855) 216-9470** between 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Need help applying?

For one-on-one application assistance, visit one of our Assistance Centers at:

Leon County Amtrak Building

918 Railroad Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32310

Hours of Operation:

Monday.....	8AM-5PM
Tuesday	8AM-5PM
Wednesday	8AM-5PM
Thursday	8AM-5PM
Friday.....	8AM-5PM
Saturday	Closed
Sunday.....	Closed



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Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for this program, you must:

- Have a total household income at or below the 80% Area Median Income threshold (see the table below for more details);
- Be past due on rent and/or utilities payments;
- Be a Leon County resident for each of the past twelve (12) consecutive months;
- Have at least one household member who has: (1) Qualified for unemployment benefits, or (2) Experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due to COVID-19; and
- Must currently reside in the rental unit for which you are applying for assistance (the applicant's landlord must also be willing to accept any rent payments from Leon County on your behalf).

Please note that according to federal program rules, the following applicants will be prioritized for assistance:

- Applicants whose household income is below 50% of the Area Median Income, and
- Applicants in households with one or more members who have been unemployed for the past 90+ days.

Leon County's Area Median Income (AMI) Thresholds by Number of Persons in Household		
Household Size	80% AMI Threshold	50% AMI Threshold
1 person	\$40,750	\$25,450
2 persons	\$46,550	\$29,100
3 persons	\$52,350	\$32,750
4 persons	\$58,150	\$36,350
5 persons	\$62,850	\$39,300
6 persons	\$67,500	\$42,200
7 persons	\$72,150	\$45,100
8+ persons	\$76,800	\$48,000
As defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development		



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Maximum Award & Allowable Expenditures:

Eligible households may receive up to 12 months of past due rent and/or utilities assistance, plus an additional 3 months of future rent assistance if extra months are needed to ensure housing stability (subject to funding availability). Any assistance provided is limited to a maximum of 15 months total. Awarded funds will be paid directly to landlords and utility service providers. Assistance is not available to homeowners under this program.

Required Documentation:

Applicants will be required to provide the following documentation with their application:

- Valid Photo ID for the primary applicant
 - ▶ Acceptable forms of identity include a picture or scanned copy of the front of a valid Florida driver's license, learner's permit, Florida identification card, passport, or military ID
- Lease or Rental Agreement
 - ▶ Documentation submitted must include the following information: Address, name of primary household member(s), name of your landlord/property manager, lease start date, lease end date (if applicable), monthly rental amount due, late fee terms, and signature page
- Most Recent Utility Bill (*only if Talquin Electric is your utility service provider*)
 - ▶ If City of Tallahassee Utilities is your utility service provider, Leon County will obtain your most recent utility bill directly from the City of Tallahassee
- Proof of Household Income (see the next section for acceptable forms of household income documentation)





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Accepted Methods of Household Income Documentation:

To verify household income, applicants may submit any of the following documents:

- Option #1: Signed 2020 tax return
 - ▶ Applicant must provide tax returns for each adult household member (for example, if a married couple files their taxes separately, a tax return must be submitted for both spouses).
- Option #2: Determination letter from another government assistance program
 - ▶ Leon County will accept proof of current enrollment in any of the following programs: Free and Reduced Meals; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); or Section 8 Housing Assistance.
 - ▶ *Please note that if you use this option to verify your household income, your household will be considered at the 80% AMI level for prioritization purposes.*
- Option #3: Signed 2019 tax return
 - ▶ If the applicant has not yet filed their taxes for calendar year 2020, Leon County will accept signed 2019 tax returns. **In this case, the applicant must attest that their income did not increase during calendar year 2020.**
 - ▶ As above, the applicant must provide tax returns for each adult household member (for example, if a married couple files their taxes separately, a tax return must be submitted for both spouses).
- Option #4: Household Income Attestation form
 - ▶ If the applicant's total household income is zero, or if the applicant cannot provide documentation under any of the other options above, applicants may submit a Household Income Attestation form. ***This form can only be completed by a case worker at a participating local human service agency.*** A list of participating agencies can be found at the end of this FAQ document.



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Have additional questions?

The Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance website will be updated regularly with new questions and more information about the program. Please continue to check back for updates.

In the meantime, a call center is also available to assist residents with questions regarding the Leon County ERA program. Citizens may reach the call center at **(855) 216-9470** between 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Also, FREE one-on-one assistance with your application is available at the following locations:

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918 Railroad Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32310

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*If you do not meet the eligibility criteria for the Leon County Emergency Rental Assistance Program, you can still receive information about other resources that may be available to you from 2-1-1 Big Bend. Just dial **2-1-1** or visit **www.211bigbend.org**.*



List of Participating Agencies for Household Income Attestation

If your total household income is zero, or if you cannot provide either a signed 2020 Tax Return or a determination letter from another government assistance program, you may submit a Household Income Attestation form to verify your household income. ***This form can only be completed by a case worker at one of the participating local human service agencies listed below.*** Please note that these agencies will complete a Household Income Attestation form for their established clients only; please do not contact an agency if you are not a client.

Agencies Supporting Household Income Attestation

Ability 1st (Center for Independent Living of North FL)	John G. Riley Center & Museum
Alzheimers Project	Kids Incorporated of the Big Bend
Americas Second Harvest of the Big Bend	Legal Aid Foundation of the Tallahassee Bar Association
Big Bend Cares	Legal Services of North Florida
Big Bend Habitat for Humanity	Lighthouse of the Big Bend
Big Bend Homeless Coalition	Lincoln Center Foundation
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Big Bend	Loved by Jesus Family Church
Bond Community Health Center	Miccosukee Youth Education Foundation
Boys Town North Florida	Neighborhood Medical Center
Brehon Institute for Family Services	PACE Center for Girls
Capital Area Community Action Agency	Pivotal Point Enterprises
Capital City Youth Services	Refuge House
Capital Medical Society Foundation	Sickle Cell Foundation
CESC	Smith-Williams Service Center Foundation
Delta Kappa Omega Foundation	Special Olympics Florida-Leon County
Dream Builders Greatness Center	Tallahassee Senior Citizens Foundation
Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region	The Boys and Girls Clubs of the Big Bend
Emergency Care Help Organization	Dick Howser Center for Childhood Svcs. (The Learning Pavilion)
Epilepsy Agency of the Big Bend	The Oasis Center for Women and Girls
FSU Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement	The Salvation Army of Tallahassee
Good News Outreach	Turn About, Inc. of Tallahassee